

vested interest in blocking webs

Under the title "Government absurdity" after having lost his free google translation facility the frustrated Christopher G D N 20 March wonders "could it be that some one has vested interest" in banning the internet in so modern Bahrain. Less Horton under "Censorship stifles" GDN 21 March on the same subject says it is plain that it was a decision taken to suit political needs. In Pakistan during General Ziaulhaq's "Islamic" rule the open sale of alcohol was banned. Treating that in an Islamic country alcohol should not be sold, it was prescribed that minorities and foreigners in Pakistan can however purchase the same under a government granted Licence. The immediate result of this ban was that the prices of alcohol shoot up, under ground distilleries sprang up, alcohol black market flourished, dozens of foreign smuggled brands started coming in and with this ban the first time the country got introduced different drugs capsules, injections, heroin, morphine demand of which gradually increased. How this destroyed our society particularly the youth is another story.

Can in this twenty first century flow of information be blocked? Certainly never ever. Computer literates know many ways how to by pass this bank which tomorrow will be known to even computer illiterate like me. It is a general belief when the authorities or the powers that be any where world over close on window with new gadgets to prevent thieves popping in, the thieves invent two new windows to keep running their "business". When in 1995-97 the internet came in Bahrain did our children know how to operate computer, what were the site addresses, how to reach them? Within a year internet cafes were full of children having good command. One must not forget that when the internet came in Bahrain the rate of access to pornographic sites gradually increased. If an honest research is made it will be found that after reaching to optimum the number of access to such sites quite decreased. The internet café owners can vouch this fact.

One can reach any site of the world whatever blockade may Batelco or Zain enforce. These blockades are factually introduce to promote some other products. Dozens and dozens of dishes, decoders are available. Dreamland service is available in Bahrain just for BD 25 a month through your computer giving access of some 200 TV live TV channels some fully sexual channels. Soon it is afraid new products (CDs) can come. We talk of so much piracy but we talk the more vendors we seek selling these pirated CDs. Two years ago I could not get a land line phone because loop wire under the law is not now allowed in multi story building. My building owner had not made internal arrangement. Anywhere in Manama, Gudaibiya, Muharraq one can see 5 to 10 loop wires going to buildings, overlapping the roads from one building room to other as if the building concerned was a telephone exchange. All these wires are of cable available at BD 3 to BD 5 a month. These are only visible to me and you but not

to those who are to take action against it. These are invisible to them because they have to protect interest of some. Less Horton and Christopher are right. Sometime interests are others. The biggest

example is open illegal fish market in front of Last Chance Manama. Bangladeshi fruit vendors become visible at same place but not the fishers.

Now TRA has proposed a law under which data of all emails, users information, text messages, telephone calls etc could be obtained from the service providers though under a court order or through permission from Public Prosecutor. TRA has appeal people to accept it on the ground for security of the country. As far as security of the country is concerned not merely the citizens but even we the residents should and in fact always are ready to sacrifice everything for this country which is providing us daily earnings. There can not be any other opinion on it. We the ordinary citizens or residents have nothing to conceal anything out of our personal telephone calls, chats or emails. Nevertheless the manner in which TRA etc is doing rightly raises some eye brows and it speaks as to how in the same series sites have been blocked even very genuine translation sites. This can be understood from one though very simple fact that the day the most authenticated G.D.N published its repo

rt same afternoon 04.00 pm was the last time for people to submit their views. Had G.F.N not published the report said date, this time would had lapsed without the knowledge of public. For such things, it is normal practice in established societies the concerned seeking public objections or feedback through a Published Press Public Notice not in silence. People have already started receiving spam email message from some sites offering special proxy. For example Arabia 1 proxy is a spam sender offering special service at \$ 120/- giving access anonymously. And this is what Christpoher has hinted at.

I am a non technicalperson but I read an article a few months back that how developed the computer technology today is. It mentioned technology exists that if an authority or agency wishes to check for example the words "mango is sweet" anywhere in the world in any language it is typed in any email or text message etc it prmopts up in the authority's machines whether. It is also a well known fact that US has the technology to pint point exactly where gloably a praticular person was speking on the phone etc.In Afghanistan it has killed some people through this technology. A dead Osman Bin Laden it has kept alive to keep the world frightened or a confined Osama bin laden it is deliberately kept alive for the same purpose. For security concern as such keeping a track of phone calls, emails of all instead of only of specific suspects is nothing to concern with the real security but as Christopher said some vested interest.